



## *Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign*

The *Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign (Campaign)* empowers 9- to 11-year-old children to eat 3 to 5 cups of fruits and vegetables and get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. This statewide social marketing initiative is led by the California Department of Public Health to improve children’s health now and reduce their long-term risk of serious health problems, especially obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and some types of cancer. The *Campaign* is funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - known as Food Stamps in California - for low-income families.

### **PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

The *Campaign* educates and inspires kids to eat fruits and vegetables and be physically active and promotes environments in which these behaviors are both easy to do and socially supported. The *Campaign* includes tested nutrition education lessons in school classrooms and youth organizations; kid-friendly promotions in schools, youth organizations, and the community; and media and public relations activities. *Campaign* promotions may link to existing events like Walk to School Month, National Nutrition Month, and TV Turnoff Week or be *Campaign*-specific like Power Up Your Summer!, which encourages kids to be physically active and eat healthy snacks during the summer months. Other special *Campaign* activities include poster and essay contests; guest speakers from farms, restaurants, and the produce industry;

store tours highlighting produce; and activities at community events. In addition, the *Campaign’s* new Photovoice project empowers kids to identify, photograph, and reflect on community factors that affect their food and play choices, then share the photos with influential adults.

The *Campaign* is implemented through the 11 *Regional Networks for a Healthy California (Regional Networks)*, which also operate adult-targeted campaigns and programs so that entire families are reached where they live, shop, eat, learn, work, worship, and play.

At the state level, the *Campaign* develops and



The mission of the ***Network for a Healthy California*** is to create innovative partnerships that empower low-income Californians to increase fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity, and food security with the goal of preventing obesity and other diet-related chronic diseases. The *Network* involves over 160 funded organizations across the state and uses a combination of education, marketing, and community change efforts.

tests materials for intermediaries, children, and parents, including the *School Idea & Resource Kits*, *Community Youth Organization Idea & Resource Kit*, *Power Up for Learning* physical activity supplement, *Kids...Get Cookin'!* cookbook, posters, parent brochures, and more. They are all designed to be appealing to kids, easy for adults to use and understand, and grounded in proven theories from the fields of health behavior, education, social marketing, and prevention. The *Campaign* also provides training and funding to the *Regional Networks*, conducts public relations activities, develops and maintains partnerships, creates new intervention components and methods, and carries out formative research and evaluation to both demonstrate and improve the effectiveness of the *Campaign*.

### **ANNUAL REACH**

Of California's 930,000 fourth- and fifth-grade children, 57 percent are from households that

qualify for SNAP-Education (households with annual incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty level). Through the *Regional Networks* and their partners, the *Campaign* engages over 100,000 children from low-income households annually in direct, research-based education and over a quarter of a million children with community-based marketing and public relations activities. Children are reached through approximately 2,000 qualifying school classrooms and 1,000 qualifying youth organization sites each year, including sites served by *Network*-funded Local Incentive Awardees and sites that are not funded by the *Network*.

### **CAMPAIGN HISTORY**

The *Campaign* was introduced in 1993 as the *California Children's 5 a Day—Power Play! Campaign*, California's first targeted campaign to complement the efforts of the National 5 A Day Program. The *Campaign* was developed through careful formative research and in close collaboration with the California Department of Education and the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Its model was proven effective through a large-scale evaluation study conducted in 1995, which indicated that the *Campaign*, when implemented through schools alone, positively influenced children's knowledge and attitudes and increased reported fruit and vegetable consumption by 7 percent. When a multi-channel, community-wide approach supplemented the school activities, fruit and vegetable consumption increased 14 percent.

The study results directed refinement of the program and helped secure a five-year grant from The California Endowment. From 1998-2001, the *Campaign's* successful model was rolled out in regions across the state. The *Campaign* continues through the support of the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known in California as the Food Stamp Program. Following the 2005 national recommendations that increased the amount of fruits and vegetables to eat, the *California Children's 5 a Day—Power Play! Campaign* was

renamed to the *Network for a Healthy California—Children’s Power Play! Campaign*.

## **PARTNERS**

The *Campaign* partners with public, private, and nonprofit organizations at the local and state levels. Partners endorse, adopt, adapt, enhance, and extend the *Campaign* and advocate for changes that support fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity. State-level partners include the California Department of Education, California Department of Food and Agriculture, American Cancer Society—California Division, and California School Garden Network. Community-level partners include schools, youth organizations, farmers’ markets, supermarkets, restaurants, media, health departments, health care providers, voluntary organizations, and other agencies interested in children’s health.

## **EVALUATION**

In addition to the 1995 large-scale evaluation study, regular formative, process, and impact evaluation efforts help assess the *Campaign’s* reach and effectiveness and guide future direction. The *California Children’s Healthy Eating and Exercise Practices Survey (CalCHEEPS)*, a biennial statewide survey of 9- to 11-year-old children initiated in 1999, provides dietary and physical activity information and helps inform the *Campaign’s* messages and interventions. *CalCHEEPS* uses a two-day food and activity diary, which is completed by children with their parents, along with a follow-up telephone interview with a subset of respondents. The *Campaign* also collects ongoing process data about the number of participating schools, youth organizations, teachers, children, and partners, as well as the intervention components used to reach them. Periodic formative research, including focus groups with children and field testing of new resources and intervention methods, ensures that



the *Campaign* continues to be relevant and effective with the target audience. The *Campaign's School Idea & Resource Kits* were successfully evaluated in 2005 to gauge impact on children's knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy related to fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity. A new large-scale evaluation study is planned for 2012. For more information, including *CalCHEEPS* data tables and *Campaign* evaluation reports, visit the Research and Evaluation section of [www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net](http://www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net).

### AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

A review conducted in 2006 and published in *Preventive Medicine: An International Journal Devoted to Practice and Theory* identified the *Children's Power Play! Campaign* as one of the top ten programs worldwide to show significant results for fruit and vegetable consumption among children. The *Campaign* was one of three 2005 finalists to receive a Leadership, Innovation, and Nutrition Collaboration Award from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service for Excellence in Practice. In 2004, the *Campaign* was awarded a gold rating through the Children's Healthy Bodies Initiative, which worked to identify programs with the greatest potential to impact childhood obesity.

### FUNDING

The *Campaign* currently is funded by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) to serve families at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. The *Campaign* also has received funding from The California Endowment, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Cancer Institute.



For more information, visit [www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/powerplay](http://www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/powerplay) or call (916) 449-5400.

This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health, *Network for a Healthy California*, with funding from the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. In California, food stamps provide assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For food stamp information, call 877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit [www.cachampionsforchange.net](http://www.cachampionsforchange.net).

